

REMARKS

Claims 22 to 45 are currently pending.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested based on the following.

With respect to paragraph four (4) of the Office Action, claims 22 to 24, 26 to 28, 31 to 34, 36 and 39 to 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by England et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,948,073.

With respect to paragraph six (6), claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over “England” in view of Okada, U.S. Patent No. 6,704,872.

With respect to paragraph seven (7), claims 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over “England”.

With respect to paragraph eight (8), claim 35 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over “England” in view of Gurr, U.S. Patent No. 4,264,960.

With respect to paragraph nine (9), claims 37 and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over “England” in view of Coley et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,790,664.

With respect to paragraph ten (10), claim 38 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over “England” in view of Flick, U.S. Patent No. 6,140,939.

As to all of the rejections as to claims 22 to 46, however, “England” is not prior art under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(e), since the present application claims priority to German patent application DE 100043499.1-31, which was filed September 1, 2000. A CERTIFIED English translation of priority German application DE 100043499.1-31 was filed in the present application on December 5, 2001 (with the Response to Notice to File Missing Parts), and another copy accompanies this response. It is therefore respectfully requested that the “England” reference be withdrawn as prior art.

Accordingly, claims 22 to 46 are allowable, since the secondary references do not cure the critical deficiencies of the England reference.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, claims 22 to 46 are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections (and any objections) be withdrawn. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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